



## Certified Nurse Aide (C.N.A)

Nursing aides, also called nursing attendants or assistants, provide basic care and help with basic living activities for patients in hospitals and residents of long-term care facilities. Some nursing aides and attendants may also dispense medication.

In nursing homes, nursing aides are often the principal caregivers. They have more contact with residents than other members of the staff. Because some residents stay in a nursing home for months or years, aides and attendants may develop close, caring relationships with their patients.

Nursing aides work as part of a healthcare team under the supervision of licensed practical nurses or registered nurses. The majority of nursing aides work in nursing homes and residential care facilities. Others are employed in hospitals, home care, and hospices.

Nursing aides spend much of their time on their feet as they take care of many patients or residents. Because they frequently lift people and do other physically demanding tasks, to avoid injury nursing aides should be trained in how to properly lift and move patients. They may also have to do unpleasant tasks, such as emptying bedpans and changing soiled sheets.

Most nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants work full time. Because nursing homes and hospitals provide care at all hours, nursing aides, orderlies, and attendants may need to work nights, weekends, and holidays.

### Indiana Wage Information

	Entry	Median
Hourly Wage	\$10.25	\$11.45

### Job Outlook in Indiana

Long term	21.8 % (increase)
Short Term	2.1 % (increase)

\*Data collected from [hoosierdata.in.gov](http://hoosierdata.in.gov)

## Job Duties

- Help patients walk, bathe, dress, eat, use the bathroom and exercise
- Prepare food trays and serve meals
- Check and record the vital signs, food intake, and liquid output of patients
- Turn, reposition, and transfer patients between beds and wheelchairs
- Give medicines as directed by supervising nurse or physician
- Clean rooms, change beds, and sterilize equipment
- Stock supplies, such as dressings and treatment trays
- Listen to and record patients' health concerns
- Observe and report changes in patients' emotions or alertness

## Important Qualities

**Compassion** – must have compassion and empathy in caring for the sick, injured, and elderly

**Patience** – must be patient in performing routine tasks of cleaning, feeding, and bathing patients or residents

**Communication skills** – must be able to understand the speech of others; must communicate effectively with patients and other healthcare workers

**Physical strength** – must be physically active for long periods without getting tired or out of breath

**Interpersonal skills** – must work closely with clients and enjoy helping people

## Skills and Knowledge

### Technical

- Provide special services to customers based on their needs
- Persuade others to approach things differently
- Notice and combine multiple pieces of information to draw conclusions
- Set up and monitor medical devices and equipment
- Knowledge of anatomy and physiology, infection control, and nutrition is helpful

### English Language Arts

- Read and understand written information
- Express ideas clearly in speaking and writing
- Listen to others, understand, and ask questions

### Math

- Counting, basic addition and subtraction
- Read measurements

## Certification and Advancement

Nurse aides must complete a formal training program. This training often takes place at high schools, professional-technical schools, and two-year colleges, and typically lasts two to five weeks. The program should consist of a minimum of 30 hours of classroom instruction and 75 hours of clinical training and must be approved by Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH). The State of Indiana also requires that nurse aides pass a competency exam upon completion of their training in order to be eligible for employment. Nurse aides then need to register with the Indiana Nurse Aide Registry. Nurse aides must be at least 16 years of age and, while a criminal record does not disqualify a person from training, it does typically limit them to a CNA related position.

In Indiana nursing aides can also become Qualified Medication Aides (QMA) after completing 100 hours of work experience and 60 hours of additional training. This certification allows them to administer medication or treatments under the direct supervision of a registered nurse or licensed practical nurse. Nursing assistants can also work up to supervisory roles where they schedule work according to patients' needs.

Working as a nursing aide can be a good background for other, higher-paying jobs in health services. Advancement into roles such as Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse (LPN/LVN) and Registered Nurse (RN) require further study and training through either hospital diploma programs or postsecondary education.

Many opportunities exist for individuals in health professions to earn additional certifications or to specialize in a particular field. Other opportunities for advancement may be found in the following occupational fields:

- ♦Medical Assisting
- ♦EMT's/Paramedics
- ♦Occupational Therapy
- ♦Physical Therapy
- ♦Midwifery
- ♦Radiography/Sonography
- ♦Physician Assisting
- ♦Surgical Technology

## How can YOU get involved?

The world of work relies on the foundational skills students acquire in your classrooms and/or programs!

- Know your students'/clients' interests and career goals
- Affirm the value of the skills/hobbies students demonstrate both in and outside of the classroom
- Infuse your classroom culture and/or meetings with career-minded activities
- Provide time to make connections between the material learned in adult education or workshops and the students' daily lives/career aspirations
- Know the basic job descriptions and training requirements of in-demand occupations in your area
- Know which WorkINdiana programs are available in your region
- Know the processes for referring students to postsecondary or on-the-job training
- Post resources where students can find more information about further education/training and careers

Sources and Further Information:

[www.bls.org](http://www.bls.org)

[www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)

[www.mynextmove.org](http://www.mynextmove.org)

[www.iseek.org/index.jsp](http://www.iseek.org/index.jsp)

[www.indianaskills.com](http://www.indianaskills.com)

[www.indianacareerexplorer.com](http://www.indianacareerexplorer.com)

[www.state.in.us/isdh/20510.htm](http://www.state.in.us/isdh/20510.htm)

\*Last Updated July 2015